

# HEALTHY NORTH DAKOTA



## HIGHLIGHTS

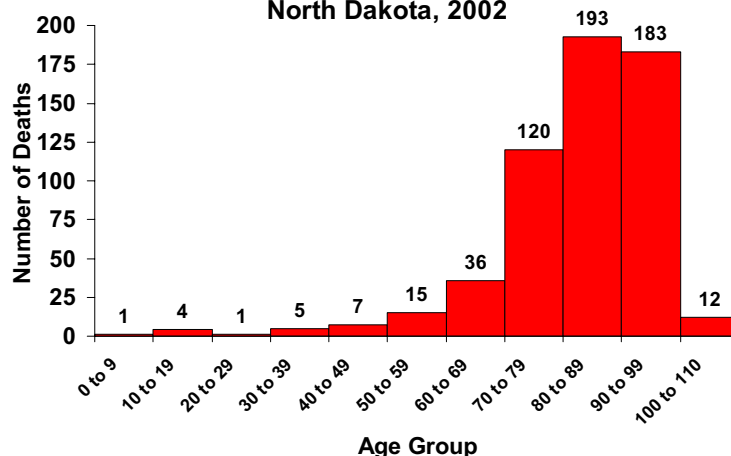
Volume 1, Number 4

January 2005

### Older North Dakotans are at risk from influenza

Despite improvements in health care and vaccination coverage, influenza is still a contributing factor in more than 500 deaths among North Dakotans each year; about 90 percent of those deaths occur among people age 65 and older. Older North Dakotans with chronic illnesses are at especially high risk. For every death due to influenza and pneumonia, many more older North Dakotans experience a serious illness resulting in life-threatening complications or requiring hospitalization. In addition, it can take weeks for older people to recover from even a routine bout with the flu. Immunization can prevent many of the influenza-related serious illnesses and deaths.

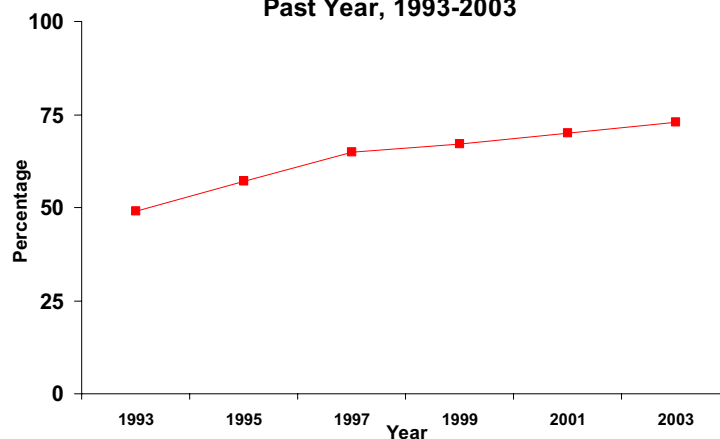
Figure 1: Deaths with Pneumonia or Influenza as Contributing Cause, by Age Group  
North Dakota, 2002



### Many older North Dakotans don't get their flu vaccinations

- In 2003, 73 percent of North Dakotans age 65 and older reported receiving a flu shot during the previous year, and 71 percent reported ever receiving a pneumonia shot.
- People age 65 and older with a chronic illness (cardiovascular disease, asthma, or diabetes) were more likely to report getting a flu shot (78%) than those without a chronic illness (68%). (2001-2003 data)
- Among people age 65 and older who reported not having a personal health-care provider, only 51 percent reported receiving a flu shot in the past year.
- The percentage of North Dakotans age 65 and older who reported getting a flu shot improved markedly over the past decade from 49 percent in 1993 to 73 percent in 2003.

Figure 2: Percentage of North Dakotans Age 65 and Older Receiving Influenza Vaccination in the Past Year, 1993-2003



## Progress being made toward HP2010 goal

Between 1993 and 2003 among people age 65 and older, North Dakota experienced a 49 percent increase in vaccination coverage for influenza vaccine (49% to 73%) and a 163 percent increase in vaccination coverage for pneumococcal vaccine (27% to 71%). This demonstrates progress toward meeting Healthy People 2010 goals of 90 percent vaccination coverage for both vaccines.

“**Healthy North Dakota - Highlights**” is prepared by the Department of Community Medicine, University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences for the North Dakota Department of Health.

To learn more about alcohol and other behavioral health risks in NORTH DAKOTA, contact the North Dakota Department of Health, 600 E. Boulevard Ave., Dept 301, Bismarck, ND 58505; 701.323.2372; or visit [www.ndhealth.gov](http://www.ndhealth.gov).



## EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES

- Implement systems to remind patients and/or providers when vaccinations are due.
- Provide standing orders from physicians that enable other personnel to prescribe and deliver vaccinations.
- Conduct regular assessments of vaccination coverage levels in providers' practices.
- Increase vaccine accessibility (e.g., vaccine clinics at senior centers or health fairs).
- Ensure a stable vaccine supply.

## TECHNICAL NOTE

Data presented in this “**Healthy North Dakota - Highlights**” come from the North Dakota Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) for year 2003. Every year since 1984, a random sample of adult (age 18 and older) North Dakotans has been interviewed about a wide variety of behavioral risks that are important to staying healthy. Full details of the survey method used to secure these data can be seen at [www.cdc.gov/brfss](http://www.cdc.gov/brfss). Whenever race-specific estimates for North Dakota American Indians are presented, a seven year aggregate BRFSS dataset (1996-2002) has been used; 438 respondents during this time period identified themselves as American Indian, and 14,127 as whites.

In 2003, there were 3,026 respondents to the North Dakota BRFSS. The responses described in this issue concern:

At risk for no influenza vaccination: people age 65 and older who reported not having an flu shot in the past year.

At risk for no pneumococcal vaccination: people age 65 and older who reported never having a pneumonia shot .

Suggested citation: Holzman GS, Sahmoun AE, Brosseau JD, Helgeson SD, Pickard SP. Older North Dakotans need to be vaccinated against influenza, 2004; 1(4):1-2.